

half a person

tozierfilms

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Genre: Boys In Love, Falling In Love, First Kiss, M/M, Richie is Gay, The Smiths cause im trash, also ik Mrs. Starrett is nice in the book, but who doesn't hate richie and eddie, car kisses, fall dates, i'll edit tomorrow, im too lazy to proofread this rn, library dates, movie time period, they're sixteen in 1992, this is just rlly soft

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Summary:

“I think I could. Love you, you know? If I really tried.”

“*Really* tried huh? I thought you already loved me, Eds. I’m wounded.”

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Author's Note:

Hello again! I apparently cannot shut up about these two so heres another one lol. Thank you for the positive feedback on my last work!! it means so much. Hmu on twitter if ya ever want to! @jupiterichie

Richie's late, which isn't really much of a surprise, considering he's never been on time to anything. Hell, he was supposed to be born February 18th, didn't pop out till March 7th. Eddie isn't surprised that Richie is late, because it's nothing new. What is new, however, is that Richie is picking him up at all. Eddie and Richie study every Sunday at the Derry Public Library, because Richie needs help with studying, and Eddie needs to get out of his house. Studying isn't all that bad either, so everyone's a winner. Usually, Eddie would walk, and Richie would bike and they would meet each other there. Granted, Richie trickling in a good 15 minutes after he was supposed to be, but he always got there nonetheless.

Today, and because Richie is Richie, Eddie is guessing every time they go now, Richie insisted on driving. Richie had turned 16 earlier this year, but his parents had only gotten him a car a week ago, and it's this old, beat up 1983 Chevrolet in an ugly, rusted, red color. A real junker, if you'd asked Eddie, but Richie loved it. Stan, who had turned 16 over a year ago, bitched that Richie's parents only got it for him so he'd stop whining, but it had worked, so the joke was kind of on Stan.

This morning, when Eddie had called to confirm that they were going to the library, Richie had insisted they drive.

"It is literally, 10 minutes from your house. Walking distance. Why would we need to drive?"

"It's not a need Sir Kaspbrak, it is merely a want. Just like when I do yoah movah, I do it cos' I want to, not because I need to." Richie said, god-awful British accent and all.

"Those things are literally not related at all, Richie." Eddie sighed. "Fine, we're driving. Not because it's smart, but because I would like nothing more than to get off the phone with you."

"Eddie Kaspbrak is that an attitude I hear? You better run mister, I will not hesitate to call your mother-" Eddie hung up before he could hear the rest.

Richie was supposed to show up at 2, and it was now 2:24. Eddie sat on his front porch, knowing if he went back inside his mom wouldn't let him come back out. He had already had to give up his right arm in order to go out today, because he was out too late last night, according to his mother. He would've argued that in no culture was 6 pm late anywhere, but he did like keeping his hearing intact, and he doubts he'd have any left after his mom was through with him. Eddie waited, knowing that Richie wouldn't just flake. Richie was an asshole, but not a forgetful one.

It's only about three minutes later that he hears a clunky engine pull down his street, and The Smiths playing loudly on an old stereo. Richie's favorite band was The Smiths, though they had broken up 5 years ago. Eddie sighed, standing up and brushing off his jeans. Richie pulled up, barely missing the sidewalk by Eddie's house, and rolled down his window.

"Get on in now, darlin! Storm's a'comin'!" Richie said. Eddie squinted and looked up at the sky.

"Doesn't look like it." And it didn't. The sky was the kind of gray that comes along with autumn, but other than that it looked pretty damn clear. Richie ignored him, and instead took to fiddling with the stereo, which had abruptly cut out. Eddie climbed in the car, noting that there weren't any seatbelts. Great, with Richie's driving he'll be lucky to make it home. "This is what happens when you listen to dead bands, Rich. Your radio doesn't agree with it." Richie scoffed, still not looking at Eddie.

"This is what happens when your parents buy you a 10-year-old car." He said, a matter of factly. It was silent for a moment before Richie suddenly

turned towards him. "And how dare you call *The Smiths* a dead band? True legends never die."

"Can you just drive the car?" Eddie said, but he couldn't hold his laugh back as he said it. Richie grinned, before putting the car back in drive. As Richie starts driving the music begins again, and the beginning chords of, 'This Charming Man' fill Eddie's ears. Eddie groans, leaning his head back. "Not this fucking song, please?" He asks, but it's in vain, as Richie starts belting the words.

"Punctured bicycle! On a hillside desolate-"

"I will jump out of this car."

"Will nature make a man of me yet?" Richie screams, leaning over to ruffle Eddie's hair. Eddie swats his hand away, sending a glare that holds no heat. Richie continues what he would call singing, though to Eddie it sounds more like a mating call. It takes less than five minutes to get to the library, Richie slamming on his breaks every time there's a red light. Richie insists it's an accident, but Eddie knows he's doing it on purpose.

Once they park, Eddie reaches behind him, grabbing his book bag from the backseat before going to open his car door.

"What do you think you're doing?" Richie says loudly, something mischievous in his eyes.

"Getting out of the car?" Eddie asks.

"Have you never been on a date before? I open the door for you, m'lady." He says, hopping out and jogging around to Eddie's side. He pulls open the door, reaching for Eddie's hand.

"I know you don't have a lot of experience with dating, so I won't be too harsh," Eddie starts, shutting his door behind him. "Usually, and correct me if I'm wrong, but wouldn't you actually have to *ask someone on a date before you just assume you're on one?*" Eddie says, *sarcastically, ignoring the hastening beat of his heart. Richie is an idiot. He swings his backpack over his shoulder and starts walking, hearing the*

telltale, 'beep,' that Richie's car lets out as he locks it. He hears Richie's footsteps rush up next to him, and Eddie turns his head slightly to look at him as they walk.

"Of course I know that, Eds. But you're not like other girls." Richie smirks, eyes wide in feign innocence. Eddie barks out a laugh.

"I'll say." He remarks, before smacking Richie on the arm. "And don't call me Eds." Richie gasps, earning a laugh from Eddie that makes him roll his eyes, but brings a smile to his face all the same. Richie nudges his shoulder against Eddie's, jarring him slightly as they walk. Richie opens the door, and Eddie walks inside, Richie following. They have their spot, off in the back corner next to the poetry books, so they both head there. Richie plops down into the seat, while Eddie gently sits down.

"What 'ave we got today, mate?" Richie asks, pulling out his binder. "science, math? Crikey! We could even covah history if ya feel up to the challenge!"

"You sound like Bob Irwin."

"Was that a compliment? From Edward Kaspbrak? Be still my-"

"My name isn't even Edward!" Eddie exclaims, before hearing a loud slamming sound come down on the table. Eddie jumps, turning towards the noise. Mrs. Starrett was standing there, a cross look on her face, her hand palm down on the table.

"Boys! Do I have to say it everytime you come in here? Inside voices, yes?" She asked, her eyes hot under her round glasses. Eddie nodded, not one to talk back to adults. He glanced at Richie, giving him his best, *open your big mouth and we'll get kicked out, face. Richie rolled his eyes, before nodding at her too. She seemed content with the response, eyeing them one more time before heading back over to her desk, which was out of view.*

"You'd think she'd give up by now." Richie said, making Eddie snort. Eddie pulls out his copy of, 'To Kill A Mockingbird,' which, in his opinion was a little overrated, a little pretentious, but not bad. He

had already read it before it was assigned, so he fills out his notebook with summaries he took from memory. He feels eyes on the side of his head, so he looks up. Richie is staring at him, a peculiar look on his face, his chin resting on his wrist.

“What are you looking at?” Eddie sighs, guessing he’s got bird shit or something on his head, because Richie is looking at him like he’s never seen him before. Richie straightens up, and clears his throat.

“Nothing.” He says, quickly, glancing down. Eddie raises his eyebrows.

“What’s on my face?” He asks. Richie looks up again, and scrunches his eyebrows.

“Huh?”

“My face, Rich. Is there something on it?” He says again, slowly. Richie clears his throat again, a warm blush appearing on his face.

“No, no. I just-I had a question.” Richie says. Eddie nods, moving his hand in a go on gesture. “Have you ever, um.”

“Jesus Christ, you Bill now? Spit it out.” Eddie says exasperatedly, whatever it is, it’s got Richie up in knots.

“You ever been in love?” Richie asks. Eddie fumbles. It’s not a Richie Tozier question, that’s for sure. Eddie knows the answer, or at least he thinks he does. He’s not sure what love is, but he’s sure he has felt it before. He loves Ben, and Mike and Bev. He loves Bill, too, and Stan. He knows he loves them because it feels right when he says it. He knows he loves Richie, though it feels different from the others. Eddie shrugs.

“I’ve loved people before, can’t say I’ve ever been in love, though.” He says, calculatedly. He’s still puzzled by the question. Richie still has his eyes on Eddie, his glasses slightly falling down his freckled nose. He sniffs, swipes his thumb under his lip. Eddie can tell he’s itching for a cigarette.

“Yea? Who’ve you loved?” Richie says, his eyes softening, a gently curiousness settling in them. Eddie feels like he’s floating.

“I, uh, I don’t know. The group, I guess. And you.” He isn’t sure what makes him place Richie in a separate category, but the expression Richie gives is worth it. A smile spreads over Richie’s pale cheeks, but he doesn’t seem to notice it’s there.

“You love me?” He asks. Eddie feels hot, he looks down, shrugging.

“You’re my best friend.” He says, simply, softly. He looks up, and Richie’s face clears with realization. He nods, coughing and pushes his glasses up.

“Right. Yea. Best friends.” He says, nodding his head. Eddie scrunches his eyebrows together. He doesn’t like this expression, the blank, pondering one that Richie now wears. He wants the gentleness back. He wants to see the soft pink tinge Richie’s face and neck again.

“I mean, it’s different.” He says, and Richie shoots up again. He raises his eyebrows and Eddie struggles to put it into words. “What I feel. It’s different when I’m with you. So.” He says, but Richie still looks confused. “I think I could. Love you, you know? If I really tried.” It doesn’t make much sense, but Richie seems to get it. He stares right at Eddie, the warm look returning. It makes Eddie’s insides feel pink, his vision blur in the best way.

“Really tried huh? I thought you already loved me, Eds. I’m wounded.” He jokes, and Eddie giggles too, still looking at him.

“You know what I mean.” Eddie says. *We’re sitting so close, he realizes, do we always sit this close? Richie’s pinky brushes against Eddie’s.*

“Yea. Yea I know what you mean.”

They finish their work quietly, and their hands stay brushing occasionally. Eddie feels a shifting of some sorts, like coming into something new. It’s almost as if all these things, all these thoughts and movements have always been there, but now they’re fighting for attention. Like they’ve been hibernating, only awaken now by the

thumping of Eddie's heart in his chest. He wonders if Richie can feel it to.

It never occurred to Eddie, how easy things were with Richie. How distant he felt from the others without really knowing it. How close he feels to Richie. He finds himself sinking deeper into the chair, sinking deeper into this new, glowing feeling. A voice breaks him from his thoughts, a voice that's familiar, but in a softer tone than he thinks he has ever heard before.

"You wanna go?" Richie asks, his breath washing over Eddie's neck, causing him to shiver. Eddie nods, reaching over and squeezing Richie's hand with his own, just because he feels like he can, before standing up. They walk out together, only moving from their side by side positions when Richie opens the door for Eddie. On their way back to the car, their pinkies resume brushing together.

"You gonna let me open my own door this time?" Eddie asks, once they have arrived at the car.

"Never." Richie says, grinning cheekily before opening the rusty door on Eddie's side. Eddie rolls his eyes and gets in, smiling softly. Richie starts the car, but turns the music down. A soft melodic song is playing, it's one Eddie hasn't ever heard before, but it's calming. They drive in a comfortable silence, the only differentiating noise from the radio is Richie's *tap, tap, tap on the steering wheel*.

Eddie watches Derry from the window of Richie's car. The sun is beginning to set, and it's an autumn sunset, which is even better. The sky is a hazy orange and blue, filling the car up with a burnt out light. It makes Richie glow.

They arrive at Eddie's house, too soon, in Eddie's opinion. He pulls in Eddie's driveway, and puts the car in park. The sound weighs heavy in the calm silence they set. "Here we are." Richie says. Eddie nods,

"Yeah." He stares out at his house for a second, before looking back at Richie, who is already staring at him. He goes to open his mouth, to say something, but nothing comes out. Richie's soft expression makes whatever he was going to say die in his throat. Richie shuffles

in his seat, turning to look at Eddie. They stare for a moment, taking each other in. Richie looks different in this light. Safe, almost. Eddie feels himself leaning in, but the fear, the feelings of *we shouldn't do this and Yea. Right. Best Friends. are completely absent. Richie is the first to break the silence.*

"If you don't get out now, I might kiss you." He says, or truthfully, whispers. Eddie shivers, a warm tingling snaking its way down his spine.

"Might?" He questions, glancing from Richie's eyes, down to his lips. Richie nods, and licks his lips. "Well I'm not planning on getting out so you might just want to-"

Richie rushes in, pressing his lips against Eddie's. Richie's lips are chapped, slightly, but not uncomfortably so. He slides his lips against Richie's, reaching to cup his face, pull him deeper. Eddie sighs into the kiss. *What took us so long? He wonders. Eddie parts his mouth, feels Richie's tongue slide against his own, Eddie lets out a soft noise. Richies mouth tastes like cigarettes, and Eddie finds he just might have a taste for tobacco after all. Richie pulls away first, and Eddie chases Richie's mouth with his own, pecking him once more before resting his forehead against Richie's.*

"Well I'll be damned." Richie says and Eddie snorts, flicking him in the face. "Ow!"

"You deserved it."

Richie laughs, pulling his bottom lip between his teeth. Eddie blushes, reaching for the door handle.

"I'll just-"

"So tomorrow-"

Richie laughs, looking down. "Tomorrow?" Eddie asks. Richie shrugs, and glances away from Eddie's eyes, before ultimately looking right back at them again.

"You wanna catch a movie at the Aladdin tomorrow?" Richie questions, his cheeks heating up.

“With the group? Or just us?” Eddie asks, just to hear him say it.

“Just, uh, just us? If that’s okay?”

“You askin’ me on a date, Tozier?” Eddie says, smugly. Richie grins.

“Guilty.” Eddie smiles at that, before leaning in and kissing Richie right on the mouth before hopping out of the car. He starts backing away smiling at Richie.

“See you tomorrow you loser! For our big date!” He calls. Richie grins, flipping him off before reaching to turn up his radio. As Richie speeds off, he hears Morissey call after him,

Call me morbid, call me pale,

I’ve spent six years on your trail,

Six long years, on your trail.

Author's Note:

Thanks for reading! Make sure to leave kudos and any comments you'd like to!